

## River Section Descriptions

*The St. Croix National Scenic Riverway was established to preserve the outstanding natural and scenic resources of the St. Croix and Namekagon rivers and provide for outdoor recreation.*

### Namekagon River

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| The Namekagon River varies from an intimate cold-water trout stream, closed in by a predominantly coniferous forest, to a slow-moving body of water which flows through marsh and swamp land. A narrow, twisting river, it is best navigated by canoe.                               |  |  |
| 1. Namekagon Dam to Hayward<br>A canoeist on this stretch can expect a two-day trip with a mixture of stream and lake environment, as well as several rapids. The river is intimate, and narrow. The best canoeing is during May and June.* There are few campsites in this stretch. | 2. Hayward to Trego<br>This section is a two-day trip; the river is relatively narrow, has a good gradient, some rapids and generally a good water level. This section is characterized by more development. There are a moderate number of campsites. | 3. County K Landing to Riverside<br>This stretch is a popular weekend trip. The river is narrow with steep sand banks, and provides a primitive setting. Many campsites are located along this stretch. <i>Drinking water is not available at Riverside Landing in 2002.</i> |

### St. Croix River

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| The St. Croix River changes from narrow to broad and shallow to deep, providing many recreational experiences. Canoes are recommended on the upper section, canoes and small fishing boats use the middle section, and motorized boats, sailboats and canoes frequent the lower section.  |   |  |
| 1. Gordon Dam to Riverside<br>This is a two-day trip that can usually only be done in the spring.* Canoeists should have some previous experience with rapids. Campsites are infrequent. <i>Drinking water is not available at Riverside Landing in 2002.</i>   | 2. Riverside to Nelson Landing<br>This two-day trip features good and relatively easy canoeing throughout the season. The river flows through a wide valley with low banks and many islands. Campsites are infrequent, except in St. Croix State Park. <i>Drinking water is not available at Riverside Landing in 2002.</i>   | 3. Nelson Landing to Highway 70<br>This stretch is a one-day trip along some of the fastest water on the St. Croix. Several sets of rapids above the confluence with the Snake River are rated as Class I (moving water with few riffles and small waves), except during periods of high water.  |
| 4. Highway 70 to St. Croix Falls<br>This section can be canoed in a two to three-day leisurely trip. The river is wide and slow moving. Wild River State Park (Minnesota) is located near Nevers Dam. The dam at St. Croix Falls requires the river traveller to leave the river at Lions Club Park (Minnesota & Wisconsin) or the St. Croix Visitor Center. A 1 1/4-mile portage around the dam exists on the Minnesota side (a map is available at the St. Croix Visitor Center). | 5. Taylors Falls to Apple River<br>The river is characterized by high bluffs and numerous back channels with no rapids. One or two-day trips are possible. Canoeing and boating conditions are good to excellent in the main channel at most water levels; however, back channels are frequently inaccessible in periods of low water. Special rules govern the speed and movement of powerboats from Taylors Falls to Stillwater. Copies of rules are available at the St. Croix Visitor Center. | 6. Apple River to Prescott<br>This section of the river is used primarily by motor boats and sailboats. Eight “slow--no wake” zones exist here. For the section from Arcola to north of Stillwater, water skiing is PROHIBITED Saturdays, Sundays and on holidays after noon, due to the amount of boat traffic that is encountered. A <i>restriction for boats heading upriver at the High Bridge, river mile 28.5, is in place to control the spread of zebra mussels.</i> |

\*Water levels are typically higher in spring, dropping during the summer with some shallow stretches. Rapids along the Riverway are rated Class I, but high water makes rapids more dangerous and can raise difficulty to Class II or III. Inquire at Riverway visitor centers for current conditions. Average travel time by canoe: three miles/hour or 15 miles/day.

Camping



National Park Service (NPS) campsites are primitive, and only accommodate tent camping. State and private campgrounds in the area offer RV camping and more facilities. Motels, cabins and resorts are also located in the vicinity of the Riverway. NPS campsites are mainly accessible by water; there are a few sites accessible by parking the vehicle and walking equipment in. Upstream of the hydroelectric dam (St. Croix Falls/Taylors Falls), camping is permitted only in designated sites. A one-night-per-site limit is enforced upstream from Nevers Dam. Between Nevers Dam and the hydroelectric dam, there is a three night limit. A time limit of seven nights per site exists below the hydroelectric dam, where there are camping zones. More camping information is available on the Riverway website: [www.nps.gov/sacn](http://www.nps.gov/sacn) or at any Riverway visitor center.

Tourist Information

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| In Minnesota contact:<br>Department of Natural Resources<br>Information Center<br>500 Lafayette Road<br>St. Paul, MN 55155-4040<br>(651) 296-6157<br>toll free in MN (800) 652-9747<br><a href="http://www.dnr.state.mn.us">www.dnr.state.mn.us</a> | In Wisconsin contact:<br>Bureau of Parks and Recreation<br>P.O. Box 7921<br>101 S. Webster St.<br>Madison, WI 53707<br>(608) 266-2181<br><a href="http://www.dnr.state.wi.us">www.dnr.state.wi.us</a> |
| Minnesota Office of Tourism<br>#100 Metro Square, 121 7th Place E.<br>St. Paul, MN 55101-2146<br>(800) 657-3700<br>Local (651) 296-5029<br><a href="http://www.exploreminnesota.com">www.exploreminnesota.com</a>                                   | Wisconsin Division of Tourism<br>201 W. Washington Ave.<br>Madison, WI 53703<br>(800) 372-2737<br>Local (608) 266-2161<br><a href="http://www.travelwisconsin.com">www.travelwisconsin.com</a>        |

Fishing

Excellent fishing attracts anglers to the St. Croix and Namekagon rivers. Good trout fishing exists on the Namekagon River above Hayward, WI. A variety of warm-water fish are caught in the remaining areas of the Riverway, including smallmouth bass, muskellunge, walleye and catfish. Either a Minnesota or Wisconsin fishing license is required, depending on where you fish. The St. Croix is a state boundary river and is referred to specifically in Minnesota and Wisconsin fishing regulations booklets. You can pick up copies of state fishing regulation booklets at Riverway visitor centers, or download copies from state Department of Natural Resources websites: [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us) or [www.dnr.state.wi.us](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us).

Canoe Rentals

Canoe rentals are available from private outfitters. Shuttle services may be included or charged in addition to the rental fee. Kayak and tube rentals are also available. A listing of outfitters is available on the Riverway website: [www.nps.gov/sacn](http://www.nps.gov/sacn), and in the Two Rivers Guide newspaper available at Riverway visitor centers.

Caring For Your River

- \* Leave no evidence of your presence. Practice low impact use.
- \* Pack out all garbage and try to reuse or recycle.
- \* Glass beverage containers are prohibited on the Riverway.
- \* If toilets are not available, bury human waste 6-inches deep, 100-feet from river, streams and campsites.
- \* Keep ALL soaps (even biodegradeable) away from the river.
- \* Use a stove. Firewood is scarce and often wet. Dry conditions may prohibit open fires. Cutting of live trees is prohibited. Dead and down wood may be gathered, **except** from islands. Use fire rings and douse fires thoroughly before you leave the campsite.
- \* Help prevent erosion--stay off sand banks.
- \* ALL mussels/clams and empty shells are protected. Do not disturb them.

Be Safe--Look Out For...

- \* Overhanging or downed trees--they can overturn a canoe and trap canoers.
- \* Sunburn--even on cloudy days.
- \* Ticks--learn the symptoms of Lyme Disease.
- \* Poison Ivy--common at woods edge (three shiny, large toothed leaves).
- \* Mosquitoes--bring repellent or netting.
- \* Safety--wearable life jackets are required for each person on board.
- \* Valuables--lock your vehicles and keep valuables out of sight.